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TAGS: SHUM, RW

SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT
REF: STATE 18330

1. UNCLASSIFIED HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT FOLLOWS: QUOTE
THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN RWANDA TODAY IS ENCOURAGING,
ESPECIALLY IN LIGHT OF RWANDA'S AUTHORITARIAN TRADITIONS
AND THE FRATRICIDAL REVOLUTION AT INDEPENDENCE IN 1959-61.
TRADITIONAL RWANDAN SOCIETY HAS ONLY A SCANT NOTION OF
THE SANCTITY OF THE INDIVIDUAL. MUCH MORE IMPORTANT ARE
THE SECURITY AND HARMONY OF THE INDIVIDUAL'S POSITION
WITHIN LINEAL GROUP STRUCTURES. AMONG THE MASSES OF
RWANDANS, THE 1959-61 SOCIAL REVOLUTION HAD LESS TO DO
WITH SECURING INDIVIDUAL FREEDOMS DENIED UNDER THE PRIOR
FEUDAL SYSTEM THAN WITH SUBSTITUTING MAJORITY (HUTU)
GROUP DOMINATION IN PLACE OF MINORITY (TUTSI) RULE.
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DURING THE DECADE FOLLOWING THE REVOLUTION, GOVERNMENTAL
POLICIES WERE BLATANTLY "COMPENSATORY" IN AN EFFORT TO
PREEMPT THE FAVORED POSITIONS TUTSIS PREVIOUSLY ENJOYED.
ALTHOUGH POLICIES ARE NOW BETTER BALANCED, DISCRIMINATION
REMAINS A HIGHLY-CHARGED POLITICAL ISSUE.

SINCE COMING TO POWER IN 1972 PRESIDENT JUVENAL HABYARIMANA

HAS MADE CONTINUED HUMAN RIGHTS PROGRESS A KEY ELEMENT OF OFFICIAL POLICY. RWANDA HAS UNDERTAKEN AN EFFORT TO PROVIDE MORE CONSISTENT LOCAL JUSTICE. THE HABYARIMANA GOVERNMENT SUPPORTS FULL INTEGRATION OF ALL ETHNIC GROUPS THROUGH A PROPORTIONAL QUOTA SYSTEM AIMED AT GUARANTEEING TUTSIS AN EQUITABLE SHARE OF JOBS AND EDUCATIONAL AND ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES. RWANDA NOW RIGHTLY CONSIDERS ITSELF AN ACTIVIST ON HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES. IT WILL, FOR EXAMPLE, IN EARLY SUMMER HOST AN AFRICAN COLLOQUIUM ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

1. RESPECT FOR INTEGRITY OF THE PERSON, INCLUDING
FREEDOM FROM:

A. TORTURE

TORTURE IS NOT USED.

B. CRUEL, INHUMAN OR DEGRADING TREATMENT OR
PUNISHMENT

WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF TRADITIONAL VALUES, RWANDAN AUTHORITIES GENERALLY RESPECT PERSONAL FREEDOMS. CRUEL, INHUMAN OR DEGRADING PUNISHMENT IS UNKNOWN.
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C. ARBITRARY ARREST OR IMPRISONMENT

ARBITRARY ARREST AND IMPRISONMENT DO OCCUR. FOR EXAMPLE, DOZENS OF PROSTITUTES IN THE CAPITAL CITY ARE REGULARLY ROUNDED UP AND INTERNED WITHOUT DUE PROCESS. MIGRANTS FROM RURAL AREAS ARE UPROOTED AND SENT BACK HOME FOR FAILURE TO HAVE WORK PERMITS IN A COUNTRY WHERE UNEMPLOYMENT CAN REACH 50 PERCENT OR HIGHER. SOME THIRTY FORMER REGIME OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN HELD WITHOUT TRIAL SINCE 1973.

D. DENIAL OF FAIR PUBLIC TRIAL

RWANDA'S ALMOST TOTAL LACK OF TRAINED LAWYERS AND JURISTS HINDERS THE PROMPT AND CONSISTENT APPLICATION OF JUSTICE THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. COMPETENT PERSONNEL ARE ASSIGNED DUTIES CONSIDERED MORE PRESSING IN OTHER BRANCHES OF THE GOVERNMENT. ALL TRIALS ARE PUBLIC.

E. INVASION OF THE HOME

SANCTITY OF THE HOME IS RESPECTED.

2. GOVERNMENTAL POLICIES RELATING TO THE FULFILLMENT
OF SUCH VITAL NEEDS AS FOOD, SHELTER, HEALTH CARE
AND EDUCATION

FROM THE OUTSET IN 1973, THE HABYARIMANA GOVERNMENT HAS
CLAIMED (AND CONVINCINGLY DEMONSTRATED) THAT ITS GOAL IS
TO SATISFY THE MATERIAL NEEDS OF THE IMPOVERISHED RWANDAN
PEOPLE. THE PARTY'S GOAL IS TO MOBILIZE THE
MASSES IN DEVELOPMENT. THE 5-YEAR PLAN FOCUSES THOSE
EFFORTS ON MEETING THE BASIC NEEDS OF FOOD PRODUCTION,
HEALTH, HOUSING AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION, PRIMARILY IN
RURAL AREAS WHERE 97 PERCENT OF RWANDANS LIVE.

3. RESPECT FOR CIVIL AND POLITICAL LIBERTIES, INCLUD-
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ING:

A. FREEDOM OF THOUGHT, SPEECH, RELIGION, PRESS

FREEDOM OF THOUGHT, RELIGION AND ASSEMBLY ARE GENERALLY
RESPECTED. PERSONS ARE NOT FREE PUBLICLY TO CRITICIZE THE
GOVERNMENT OR ITS LEADERSHIP AND THE PRESS IS GOVERNMENT
CONTROLLED. INFORMED DISCUSSION OF SENSITIVE ISSUES DOES
OCCUR, ESPECIALLY IN THE ACADEMIC COMMUNITY.

B. FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT WITHIN THE COUNTRY,

FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT IS LIMITED. (A) BY POLICIES TO
RESTRAIN RURAL-URBAN MIGRATION UNDER HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT
CONDITIONS AND (B) BY STRICT CONTROLS ON THE ISSUANCE OF
PASSPORTS FOR ANY CITIZENS NOT IN THE REGIME'S GOOD
GRACES. ON THE OTHER HAND, FREEDOM OF IN-COUNTRY MOVEMENT
HAS BEEN GREATLY LIBERALIZED UNDER PRESIDENT HABYARIMANA,
AND EMIGRATION INTO NEIGHBORING TERRITORIES FROM OVER-
POPULATED RWANDA IS ACTIVELY ENCOURAGED.

C. FREEDOM TO PARTICIPATE IN THE POLITICAL

CURRENT POLICIES CONTINUE TO DOWNPLAY "POLITICS" --AND
THEREFORE POLITICAL LIBERTIES -- IN FAVOR OF ENLISTING
TOTAL NATIONAL PARTICIPATION IN THE TASKS OF DEVELOPMENT.

THERE ARE NO NATIONAL ELECTIONS, ALTHOUGH LOCAL COMMUNITY
COUNCILS ARE NOW CHOSEN BY A NON-PARTISAN VOTE IN WHICH
ALL ADULTS ARE ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE. INSTEAD, THE
OFFICIALLY SANCTIONED NATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY DEVELOPMENT
MOVEMENT(MRND), WITH MEMBERSHIP OPEN TO ALL, IS TASKED
WITH ORGANIZING AND APPORTIONING THE DEVELOPMENTAL BURDEN
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AMONG ALL SECTORS OF THE POPULACE. ALTHOUGH EXPLICITLY BARRED FROM "POLITICAL" ACTIVITY, MRND IN FACT PLAYS THE QUASI-POLITICAL ROLES OF CONSULTATIVE AND PUBLIC INFORMA-

TION ORGANIZATION.

4. GOVERNMENT ATTITUDE AND RECORD REGARDING INTERNATIONAL AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL INVESTIGATION OF

SENSITIVE TO ITS OWN TRAGIC HISTORY AND OUTSIDE CRITICISM, RWANDA HAS BEEN COOL TOWARD PERCEIVED CHALLENGES TO ITS "NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY." U.N. HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION REPRESENTATIVES FAILED IN THEIR ATTEMPTS TO INVESTIGATE AND MODERATE ETHNIC BLOODLETTING IN THE EARLY SIXTIES. AND THE CURRENT GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN SIMILARLY UNWILLING TO ALLOW OUTSIDERS TO PROBE CONDITIONS OF SOME THIRTY POLITICAL PRISONERS, HELD SINCE 1973. END QUOTE.

2. YOU SHOULD FORWARD COPY OF THIS REPORT TO GOVERNMENT AS INSTRUCTED REFTTEL.

3. COPY OF REPORT WILL BE GIVEN TO AMBASSADOR UBALIJORO IN WASHINGTON ON JANUARY 31. DEPARTMENT HAS REQUESTED FRENCH TRANSLATION AND WILL CABLE IT SOONEST. COMPLETE PACKAGE OF ALL HUMAN RIGHTS REPORTS HAS BEEN REQUESTED AND WILL BE FORWARDED ASAP.

4. DECONTROL UPON RECEIPT. VANCE

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